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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 001509

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DEPT FOR EUR PDAS RIES, EUR/WE, EUR/ERA, INR FOR HASLUP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/08/2013

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SUBJECT: GOI WILL MODIFY EU PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES TO
ACCOMMODATE (POST) WAR REALITIES

REF: 2002 ROME 6037

CLASSIFIED BY: A/POL MC GARY ROBBINS. REASON: 1.5 (B)(D).
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11. (C) SUMMARY. MFA DIRECTOR FOR EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS MASSIMO GAIANI TOLD EMBOFFS ON APRIL 2 THAT IRAQ AND RESTORING INTRA-EU AND TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS WILL LIKELY BE THE POLITICAL PRIORITIES WHEN ITALY TAKES OVER THE EU PRESIDENCY JULY 1. (SEPTTEL WILL REPORT ECONOMIC (FIRST PILLAR) PRIORITIES.) HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE CONVENTION/INTER-GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE (IGC) PROCESS WOULD NOT BE COMPLETED IN TIME TO SIGN A SECOND TREATY OF ROME. THE BALKANS, ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL, EU-RUSSIA, AND ENLARGEMENT ALL REMAIN IMPORTANT TO THE GOI, AND WILL BE GIVEN APPROPRIATE ATTENTION DURING ITS EU PRESIDENCY. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) IN A NOD TO THE NEW PARAMETERS DEFINING EU INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS, GAIANI SAID THAT "IRAQ IS THE PRIORITY" FOR THE EU NOW, AND THE SITUATION IS LIKELY TO BE THE SAME WHEN ITALY TAKES OVER THE PRESIDENCY FROM GREECE ON JULY 1. PIECING BACK TOGETHER THE TATTERED RELATIONS AMONG EU MEMBERS AND BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE U.S. WILL CONSUME MOST POLITICAL ENERGY FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

13. (C) ACCORDING TO GAIANI, THE GOI HAD ALL BUT WRITTEN OFF HOPES FOR A SECOND "TREATY OF ROME," AS REPORTED REFTTEL. HE SAID THAT THE CONVENTION PROCESS WAS NOT FOCUSED SUFFICIENTLY ON THE "CONSTITUTION" GIVEN CURRENT EVENTS; THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE THAT CONVENTION PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP TO HIS SCHEDULE OF A JUNE CLOSE FOR THE CONVENTION AND PRODUCTION OF THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE DOCUMENT. IF THIS SLIPPED TO JULY OR LATER, A TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY DURING THE ITALIAN PRESIDENCY WAS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. COUPLE
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THIS WITH THE PROPOSALS OF CERTAIN MEMBERS, SUCH AS THE UK, FOR A COOLING OFF PERIOD OF A NUMBER OF MONTHS BETWEEN THE CLOSE OF THE CONVENTION AND THE START OF THE IGC, AND "WE WILL BE LUCKY TO EVEN START, LET ALONE FINISH," THE IGC DURING THE ITALIAN PRESIDENCY, LAMENTED GAIANI. HE HOPED THE WAY AHEAD WOULD BE CLEARER AFTER THE EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT IN ATHENS ON APRIL 16/17, TO COINCIDE WITH THE ENLARGEMENT TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY.

14. (C) THE PRIORITIES REPORTED REFTTEL ARE STILL THERE, GAIANI SAID, THEY WILL JUST HAVE TO TAKE THEIR PLACE IN THE NEW PECKING ORDER. THE BALKANS, ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL, EU-RUSSIA, ENLARGEMENT, ARE ALL IMPORTANT TO THE GOI, AND WILL BE GIVEN APPROPRIATE ATTENTION. ITALY WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT THE GRECO-ITALIAN PLAN TO RE-FOCUS EU ATTENTION ON BALKANS DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION REMAIN ON TRACK. THE GOI WOULD DO WHAT IT COULD TO MAKE SURE IT DID. THE EU WILL PROMOTE THE STABILIZATION AND ASSOCIATION PROCESS (SAP) AS A "PRE-ACCESSION" MODEL TO HELP INTEGRATE SOUTHEAST EUROPE INTO THE EU.

15. (C) OTHER POLITICAL ISSUES ON WHICH THE GOI WOULD FOCUS INCLUDE:

- THE NEXT ROUND OF ENLARGEMENT: ITALY WOULD MAKE CERTAIN THAT BULGARIA AND ROMANIA'S SUPPORT FOR THE US ON IRAQ WOULD NOT BE USED BY CERTAIN EU MEMBERS TO DERAIL THEIR ACCESSION. ITALY WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT TURKISH ACCESSION REMAINS ON THE AGENDA.

- EU/RUSSIA: ITALY WOULD USE THE STILL STRONG FRIENDSHIP
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BETWEEN PUTIN AND BERLUSCONI TO MEND ANY DIFFERENCES FROM THE WAR, AND TO BEGIN A MORE "STRUCTURED, FORMAL" RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOSCOW AND BRUSSELS. THIS WOULD INCLUDE, FOR EXAMPLE, FREQUENT MEETINGS BETWEEN THE COREPER AND RUSSIAN OFFICIALS.

- EU AND "NEIGHBORING STATES": ITALY WILL USE ITS PRESIDENCY TO PROMOTE THE INTEGRATION, BUT NOT THE ACCESSION, OF STATES SUCH AS UKRAINE AND MOLDOVA.

- THE "MED" WOULD ALSO REMAIN A HIGH PRIORITY. ITALY HAD HOPES THAT THE EURO-MED MINISTERIAL IN NAPLES IN NOVEMBER WOULD ACT AS A CATALYST FOR PROCESSES RANGING FROM THE MEPP TO MED IMMIGRATION CONTROL TO AN EU-MERCOSUR TREATY AGREEMENT BY EARLY 2004.

16. (C) PM DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR BRUNO ARCHI CONFIRMED TO POLOFF AN APRIL 4 THAT THE GOI HAD ACCEPTED THAT COMPLETING THE CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING PROCESS AND IGC BEFORE THE END OF THE ITALIAN PRESIDENCY WAS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE EU HEADS OF

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DS-00
	EAP-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	VCE-00	NSAE-00	DSCC-00
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P 090833Z APR 03
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
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INFO EU CANDIDATE STATES COLLECTIVE
EU INTEREST COLLECTIVE
EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 ROME 001509

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GOVERNMENT RETURNING TO SIGN A SECOND TREATY OF ROME, EVEN IF THE PROCESS IS COMPLETED DURING THE NEXT (IRISH) PRESIDENCY OR BEYOND. WHEN POLOFF POINTED OUT THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT MAY WISH TO HAVE BOTH THE HONOR OF CONDUCTING THE CEREMONY
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AND NAMING THE TREATY, ARCHI SAID THAT THE MEMBERS WOULD AGREE TO RETURN TO ROME TO SIGN THE TREATY IN A SPIRIT OF "TRADITION AND CONTINUITY." WE LEAVE IT TO DUBLIN AND USEU TO COMMENT ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH ALTRUISTIC GESTURES IN THE EU.

17. (C) COMMENT: THAT THE WAR HAS BLOCKED PROGRESS ON CONVENTION DISCUSSIONS, THEREBY JEOPARDIZING GOI PLANS FOR SIGNING THE "CONSTITUTION" DURING ITS PRESIDENCY AND FORCING IT TO ADJUST PRIORITIES, MUST BE A BLOW TO BERLUSCONI, GIVEN THAT HE HAS MENTIONED NUMEROUS TIMES IN PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL SETTINGS THAT IT WOULD BE THE CROWNING JEWEL OF THE ITALIAN PRESIDENCY. HOWEVER, IT ALSO SIGNALS THAT ITALY IS READY TO TAKE A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO ITS PRESIDENCY. AS WE HAVE REPORTED, AND AS EXEMPLIFIED IN HIS SELF-PERCEIVED ROLE AS BROKER BETWEEN PUTIN AND THE WEST, BERLUSCONI LIKES NOTHING MORE THAN TO ACT AS A GO-BETWEEN AND DEAL MAKER. IF HE CAN INDEED PULL OFF A POLITICAL REUNITING OF THE EU AND A RAPPROCHEMENT (PARDON THE FRENCH) BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE US, THE SATISFACTION MAY BE SOME COMPENSATION FOR LOSING THE CHANCE OF A SECOND "TREATY OF ROME."
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